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(54) Title: SYSTEM FOR FORMING PROGRAM GUIDE INFORMATION FOR USER INITIATION OF CONTROL AND COMMUNICATION FUNCTIONS

(57) Abstract

A video decoder system provides a Program Guide User interface for User operation of functions including Email, telephone, Internet access, fax, home control, and video–phone functions. A method for forming a program guide allowing a User to select a function involves receiving program guide information for display from at least one source (305, 310). The program guide information including User selectable menu options is formatted for display (315). Access data retrieved from memory enables initiation of communication between the decoder and a device external to the decoder in response to User selection of a displayed program guide menu option. Program map information is generated that associates a displayed User selectable menu option with access data that enables initiation of communication between the decoder and the external device (330). Also, the decoder may generate User selectable menu options for display in the program guide (335, 340, 345).